

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

12 November 1977

2 Flaws: New CIA Chief

GREENCASTLE, Ind. (AP) — CIA Director Stansfield Turner says he sees two potential flaws in the nation's revamped intelligence policy — timidity when risky action is demanded and the possibility of security leaks through increased supervision.

Nevertheless, he said, he feels the nation is on the way to establishing the proper balance between checks on the CIA and effective intelligence gathering.

"I can't guarantee you this is going to work, but I'll tell you that I'm optimistic today," he told an audience at DePauw University yesterday. "I think in two or three years it will settle down into a relationship that is one of good supervision, good oversight but still allowing enough initiative, enough effectiveness to perform the vital intelligence missions that our country requires."

Addressing a student group for the first time since his appointment as head of the CIA, Turner said that while undercover operations are now used only with presidential sanction, "the spy . . . remains a vital arrow in the quiver of our intelligence capabilities" and probably will for years longer.

Turner conceded there are risks "in two directions" in the supervisory process designed to guard against CIA excesses, he said.

"One is what I call timidity . . . (that) we'll only do those things that are easy and not risky," he said. "It's easy . . . to vote 'No.' It's more difficult to stand up and say, 'Yes, that risk is worth it — it's important to the country.'"

"And the second danger we face," Turner said, "is one of security leaks — the more you proliferate the number of people in the oversight process . . . the more danger there is of some inadvertent leak which will destroy an intelligence operation, endanger lives and cost information we would obtain for our country's benefit."

Pointing out that most of the information gathered by the CIA is overt and academically useful, Turner also condemned universities which forbid associations between their scholars and the intelligence community.

"(If) a university has a regulation that any external contact . . . must be reported, clearly that's fine," he said. "But there have been cases where they have singled out intelligence . . . I think that's discriminating against the individual's right to association and right to determine with whom he conducts his business."

He later told reporters he was pleased with the disposition of charges against former CIA director Richard Helms, accused of testifying falsely before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Helms received a fine and suspended sentence in a plea bargain arrangement with the Justice Department.

"I clearly am reminded . . . that none of us in government is above the law or entitled to lie," Turner said.